

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF VICTORIA
DEFERRED REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2023
6:30PM – OLD SCHOOL
730 VICTORIA RD., VICTORIA

MINUTES

1. Meeting called to order

Deputy Mayor Shelley Trainor called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Quorum was established.

Councillors present: Deputy Mayor Trainor, Marly Anderson, Jean McCardle, Tom Wright

Staff present: CAO Anna Keenan, FAA Marsha Empson

Mayor Trainor acknowledged the members of the public present both in-person and participating by Zoom, and noted that she would invite 3-minute periods of public comment throughout the meeting.

She also welcomed the newly-acclaimed Councillor Jean McCardle to Council. Councillor McCardle is returning to Council after serving the last full 4-year term, which concluded in early December.

2. Approval of agenda

Councillor Wright moved that the Agenda be adopted as presented.

Seconded by Councillor Anderson

CAO Keenan suggested that a new in-camera agenda item be added at Item 14a, for Council to consider a Code of Conduct complaint received by the CAO today, from a member of the public. SO MOVED by Councillor Wright.

Seconded by Councillor Anderson. No discussion, passed unanimously (3 votes for, 0 against)

Councillor Eric Gilbert joined the meeting at 6:38pm.

No further amendments to the Agenda were suggested.

Agenda as Amended was adopted unanimously (4 votes for, 0 against)

3. Declaration of conflict of interest

None

4. Approval of Minutes

Councillor Wright moved that the minutes of the April 12, 2023 Council meeting be adopted as presented. Seconded by member Gilbert. No amendments suggested. Passed unanimously (4 votes vor, 0 against)

5. Presentations and public input & questions

(No public presentations were requested this month.)

a. Brief period for questions & answers from the public to Council

- Resident Brenda Boudreau distributed invitations to the May 22 Victoria Day event which will acknowledge the teachers that taught in the Old School. Henry Dunsmore will be contributing to a special gallery of pictures to be shared. Lots of interesting memorabilia will be on display. Lieutenant Governor Antoinette Perry will be in attendance. Deputy Mayor Trainor will be MCing the event, Councillor Gilbert will be presenting at the event and has a peach tree to plant.
- Resident Brenda Boudreau also congratulated Council on securing the \$5000 beach grant from Tourism PEI, and noted Mayor Trainor's initiative in spotting the funding opportunity in March.
- Resident Susan Oxley noted that she had walked through Victoria park, saw the newly reconstructed and re-installed stairs, and noted they are steep. She asked if insurance has been confirmed. CAO Keenan responded that she has not yet viewed the reinstalled stairs, but as they are a reconstruction of the same stairs previously present (with construction covered by the Beach Grant) she had assumed coverage would apply equally to these rebuilt stairs as to the past, but will visit the site and verify insurance coverage.
 - **Action** - CAO to check on park insurance and steepness of stairs.
- Councillor Jean McCardle noted that picnic tables are also placed. CAO Keenan noted that these tables were in storage in the closed park bathrooms for a few years, and are owned by the province, but the Beach Grant has enabled them to be removed and set out, and given basic maintenance care.

Comment that sound is poor on Zoom. CAO requested that all speak up to support virtual access to the meeting. Will investigate an expansion microphone for the next meeting.

- Kent Cooke - Victoria Fire Department safety officer was in attendance. Newly purchased used fire truck on display outside the meeting hall. This was purchased from Vermont by the Victoria Volunteer Fire Department Association, and transferred to the

Department. It was relocated to Victoria over the weekend. This will replace the oldest truck in Victoria's fleet, which has now been retired.

6. Business arising from Minutes

a. Update on the May 29 by-election to fill one Council vacancy

Mayor Trainor welcomed Jean McCardle back to council.

CAO Keenan also offered her congratulations and thanked Councillor McCardle for stepping forward. CAO Keenan noted that there being only one nomination for one vacancy, the post was filled by acclamation, and no election is required. This saves funds which can therefore be allocated to other matters - notably general maintenance.

CAO Keenan thanked Hilary Price for her efficiency in her role as Municipal Electoral Officer, and noted that 'how to' guides have been archived which will facilitate the process for any future Council elections.

b. Council training day - next steps

CAO Keenan noted that, as discussed at the previous council meeting, she had reached out to request support from provincial Municipal Affairs staff on Council training. Nearly 6 months into the term as new Councillors, and 3 months with a new CAO, this seems like a good opportunity to deepen our governance skills and build team alignment.

In discussions with provincial staff, they are willing to provide training, but suggested that specific questions should be curated to better guide a tailored training, beyond the introductory 'roles and responsibilities' training materials that have already been provided by the province. CAO has begun compiling governance questions, and has invited Councillors to submit their own questions, so that they can be forwarded to Municipal Affairs.

The province will provide their answers in writing, so that a self-directed session can occur, facilitated by the CAO, who will be responsible for training incoming Councillors in future years. Provincial staff will be invited to attend.

By general consensus, Councillors scheduled a 2-hour training session for Monday May 29 @ 6:30pm.

c. AMAR property and Victoria park - update from CAO and council confirmation of next steps: requesting transfer of ownership of the property from the province to the Municipality.

CAO Keenan noted that as instructed, she had sent letters to provincial staff requesting meetings and sharing the municipal understanding of the process. She had not heard back from any provincial decision-makers, except for junior staff who noted that higher-level management had had a meeting on the topic on April 20, and they were awaiting further direction.

CAO Keenan also reported that she and Mayor Trainor had met with local MLA Jamie Fox for advice on the subject. MLA Fox has recommended that the municipality write a letter requesting transfer of ownership to RMV, and indicate its intended future use.

While Council has not determined a single future use of the site, we are confident that it will be one of two uses: either continuing its use as recreational and open space as a park, or light industrial zoning for aquaculture facilities.

The CAO requested direction from council to send this letter on behalf of the municipality, and noted that the request made in February of 2020 by then-CAO Ron Coffin was declined, but that a new request could be submitted with different wording and objectives.

Deputy Mayor Trainor questioned whether the application should reference a transfer of ownership or a long term lease. While the province seemed to be encouraging the submission of an application, perhaps time could be saved by determining the correct option before submitting.

Councillor Gilbert expressed a desire to discuss the intended use of the park before submitting. He felt that AMAR should not be explicitly named anywhere on the application. Deputy Mayor Trainor agreed that wording on the application should be selective to avoid unwanted use.

Councillor Wright questioned whether the application would be for the single parcel of PID 207811. CAO Keenan confirmed that she would also include PID 462408 in the application, to allow for both possible expansion of the AMAR property and recreation space further down the causeway. Councillor Gilbert expressed concern that extra land promised to the municipality by provincial government in the past, but was not granted. He also mentioned the requirement of a public meeting. CAO Keenan clarified that a public meeting would be needed if rezoning was being applied for. Deputy Mayor Trainor clarified that the action item from this discussion is to request the acquisition of land in order to give RMV some options with what to do with it.

Councillor Wright questioned if the municipality pays taxes to the province. CAO Keenan responded that yes, we pay Property Tax on each of our municipally-owned properties, but we receive a 'grant in lieu of property taxes' from the province which offsets approximately 50% of

this amount.

The 10-year lease we hold with the province (expiring in August of this year) says that if the RMV is not able to maintain the Victoria Park washrooms, they will be demolished.

BE IT RESOLVED that Council instructs the CAO to prepare and send a letter to the Provincial government, requesting the transfer of ownership - or long-term lease - of the area on the Causeway now known as Victoria Park (PIDs 207811 and 462408) from the Province to the Municipality, stating the future intended uses of the property as being either its continuation as a municipally-managed public recreation area, or – subject to public consultation and approval of the relevant zoning changes and development applications – light industrial zoning for aquaculture facilities on the Causeway.

Motion moved by Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Gilbert.

Motion moved unanimously (4 votes for, 0 against).

Resolution #2023-31

Public input:

- A resident stated that they feel it's a good plan to have RMV own both portions of the causeway property as it would be beneficial for the tax base. They feel it's a good idea to still have a park on the other side of the AMAR property.
- A resident expressed that they are in favour of keeping a green space at the Victoria park location. They feel it's a calming space, a good vantage point for the view of Victoria and a quiet space where nobody is trying to sell anything. They questioned whether money could be raised to self support the park. They also mentioned that overnight camping has been occurring at the park space.
- Councillor Gilbert stated that there are ways that the park could be used to raise funds, such as weddings and private parties.
- CAO Keenan mentioned that she received comments that a walking path to and from the park could be beneficial.
- Deputy Mayor Trainor reminded that wants and needs could be negotiated with AMAR if expansion was to be considered.

7. CAO Report

a. Actions list - CAO Keenan apologised to all who had downloaded the multiple extra pages attached to the actions list. 6 tasks are currently in progress, 2 not yet started and the remainder have been completed.

b. Development permits report - No new items or approvals. Report is attached to the meeting package.

c. Activities report - presented by CAO Keenan, the full report is attached to the meeting package.

d. Financial update - the full report is attached to the meeting package.

e. FPEIM annual meeting summary - the full report is attached to the meeting package.

Public input:

- A member of the fire department confirmed that no parking signs had been placed around the village. It was asked who would enforce the rule. CAO Keenan confirmed that while there is no bylaw currently, one could be worked on. She also indicated that she will be asking for recommendations from the department of transportation, as the province is responsible for the roads in the village. Another resident then stated that the signs were illegal. CAO Keenan brought up the idea of closing the central roads to public traffic, to which a resident commented that she had been trying to arrange that for the last 10 years. She indicated that Councillor Anderson has info on that matter that could be shared. Councillor Gilbert commented that the public should be parking on only one side of the street and that technically there is no legal parking on the streets, but that the RCMP won't/can't address it unless it's brought to their attention. He mentioned that it's the fire department tasked with placing the signs, and that they are 'unofficially' placed on the opposite side of the busiest part of the street. It was also indicated that more signs are needed.

8. Deputy Mayor's report - presented by Deputy Mayor Trainor, the full report is attached to the meeting package.

9. Reports from Standing & ad hoc Committees:

a. Water & Sewer Commission Chair's report - report provided by Chair Brown, presented by CAO Keenan, attached to the meeting package.

Councillor Wright questioned what makes up the water & sewer accounts receivable total? FAA Empson explained that it consists of 2023/24 invoicing, 2022/23 IRAC increase and 2022/23 overdue receivables.

b. Planning Board Chair's report

Verbal update provided by Councillor Anderson. She indicated that Planning Board had set a schedule for addressing individual items within the Draft Official Plan. They had also met earlier that day to review the legal advice received regarding the Draft Official Plan. Planning Board is requesting that council approve CAO Keenan to review and make agreed upon changes.

Motion to approve that CAO Keenan will review legal advice provided and will make agreed upon changes to Draft Official Plan.

Motion made by Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Gilbert.

Motion moved unanimously (4 votes for, 0 against).

Resolution #2023-32

10. Introduction and Reading of Bylaws

a. Fire Services Bylaw

CAO Keenan discussed the bylaw process that is defined by MGA. She explained that the Fire Services bylaw being discussed would not be read aloud as it was posted beforehand, as required. New bylaws will be posted to the municipal website once approved.

There was much discussion surrounding wording of this bylaw. A current member of the fire department explained that a template was used and that wording was edited where required by fire department executives. He also explained that the fire department wanted to retain the rights to elect any new fire chief, but it was accepted that the fire department could make recommendations to council for a qualified person who council could then consider for approval.

Councillor Wright commented that the word “qualified” is an important distinction when considering a fire chief.

Councillor Gilbert indicated that there were many amendments he would like to see made. Councillor Anderson stated that she’d like to defer passing of the bylaw until amendments were made.

Council agreed that they approve passing of the first reading, with amendments to be made before second reading. CAO Keenan encouraged amendments being provided prior to next meeting. Amendments must be read aloud if they are made before second reading.

This Municipal Fire Department Bylaw, Bylaw #2023-01, was read a first time at the Council meeting held on the 15th day of May, 2023.

Motion moved to accept first reading of the Fire Services Bylaw.

Motion moved by Councillor McCardle, seconded by Councillor Wright.

Motion moved unanimously (4 votes for, 0 against).

Resolution #2023-33

11. Introduction of New Business

a. A visiting circus troupe from the Magdalen Islands in late July (proposal by Victoria Playhouse) - CAO seeks direction from Council

Council members thought the idea sounded fun. Questions were raised about insurance, permits, security, first aid and food and drink. Ultimately, any requirements would need to be filled by the circus troupe itself or the group proposing the event. No decision required.

b. Affordable Housing initiatives for Victoria - report on ideas emerging from CAO attendance at the federal Housing Accelerator Fund briefing, the PEI Housing Strategy municipalities roundtable discussion, and correspondence received from Avalina Homes; CAO seeks direction from Council.

CAO Keenan questioned whether she could continue conversations with Avalina homes and other developers to determine needs and desires, and how that can work for RMV.

Councillor Gilbert questioned the use of municipal or private lands. CAO Keenan answered that both can be considered.

Councillor McCardle reminded that this was discussed in 2019 and indicated she is in support of multi-ethnic growth.

Councillor Gilbert offered his support, but cautioned that lack of follow through for promises of affordable housing was something to be aware of. He also mentioned that he sees this as part of the Official Plan, but knows CAO Keenan is currently overstretched with multiple priorities.

CAO Keenan indicated that while she hadn't yet been directed by council to spend time on this, she was requesting the OK to carry on further discussions surrounding affordable housing.

Housing Accelerator Funds can be broadly applied if certain requirements are met by municipality. Applications are due this summer.

Councillor Wright indicated that he had no issues with supporting the request, but wanted to ensure the CAO has the time.

The general consensus is that CAO Keenan will continue conversations without overcommitting. Decision making will be brought to council as required.

c. A walking path in Victoria: proposal from a resident, CAO seeks direction from Council.

This item was brought forth by newly appointed councillor Jean McCardle, before her appointment to Council. Councillor Gilbert indicated that this had been discussed many times in the past and he didn't see it as a priority. He felt that while CAO Keenan could be included in the initial dialogue, there were other community groups who may be able to focus on this.

CAO Keenan will not prioritise this at this time, but as requested by Deputy Mayor Trainor, this would remain as an item of interest.

d. Parking and summer traffic calming: CAO seeks direction from Council.

This was discussed earlier in the meeting, but Councillor Gilbert brought forth the idea of seasonal speed bumps. The municipality would be responsible for placing, maintaining and storing. Data from a traffic study conducted in the RMV a number of years ago may be available from the Department of Transportation.

e. Summary of priority activities for 2023: CAO seeks direction from Council

The CAO outlined that after 3 months in the role, she had identified the following overall priorities and major areas of work for municipal staff in 2023.

1. Supporting Council governance
2. Overseeing approved Capital projects (Wharf, Causeway, Generators)
3. Planning Board - Finalizing the Official Plan
4. The Future of Victoria Park (& the Amar proposal)
5. Fire department
6. Municipal Financial Sustainability - policy
7. Municipal Financial Sustainability - operations
8. Community newsletter & contributions
9. Emergency Measures Plan
10. Maintenance & services
11. Forward Capital Project Planning, for future years

Feedback and commentary was gathered from Council and the public present to inform the CAO's work on and relative prioritization of these files.

12. Reading of Council Correspondence

(No correspondence received this month that was not already discussed in other agenda items)

13. Inquiries by members of Council

No new inquiries.

Jean McCardle left the meeting at 9:15pm.

Motion moved that council move to in-camera portion of the meeting at 9:17pm.

Motion moved by Councillor Wright, seconded by Councillor Gilbert.

Motion carried unanimously (3 votes for, 0 against).

14. In-Camera discussions

- a. Updates on contracts for staff, facility rentals, and service providers
- b. Discussing CAO performance review discussion (quarterly - deferred from April meeting)
- c. Update to Council on legal matters
- d. Code of conduct matter

Motion moved for council to come out of in-camera portion of meeting at 10pm.

*Motion moved by Councillor Wright, seconded by Councillor Gilbert.
Motion carried unanimously (3 votes for, 0 against).*

15. Report out & Actions Arising from In-Camera discussion

Items discussed, CAO has clear direction from Council about how to proceed with each item.

16. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Deputy Mayor Trainor at 10:02pm.